DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 448 475 CS 217 372

AUTHOR	Smith, Joanna J.
TITLE	Descriptive Writing: A Thematic Unit.
PUB DATE	2000-12-00
NOTE	44p.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Classroom - Teacher (052)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Class Activities; *Descriptive Writing; Learning Activities; Lesson Plans; Middle Schools; Student Educational Objectives; *Thematic Approach; Units of Study; *Writing Skills
IDENTIFIERS	Writing Folders

ABSTRACT

This thematic unit for teaching descriptive writing is organized around 10 days of lesson plans. The unit begins by asking key questions about descriptive writing and providing information on grade level, ability level, number of lessons and length of classes, and prior knowledge students should have. It also offers a unit rationale and key concepts/generalizations, skills and attitudes to be developed. The unit is outlined in the following way: Day One--A Drawing Activity; KWL Chart; Day Two--Modeling a Good Descriptive Text, (Frayer Model Adaptation), Graphic Organizer, Model Overheads; Day Three--Sign-Up and Rubric Explanation, Suggested Questions Handout, Rubric Handout; Day Four--Unknown Character Mini-Lesson; Day Five--Mad Libs Mini-Lesson, (Adaptation of the Cloze Technique); Day Six--In-Class Writing, QAR Handout; Day Seven--Grab Bag Activity; Day Eight--Peer Editing, Peer Editing Worksheet; Day Nine--Hershey Kiss Activity; and Day Ten--End of Unit Journal Writes, Journal Writes, Turn in Descriptive Writing Folders. (NKA)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 448 475

Descriptive Writing

A Thematic Unit

Author: Joanna J. Smith

Lamberton Middle School

Spring 2001

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

J. J. Smith

CS 217 372

Joanna J. Smith
Unit Plan Overview

I. Topic:

A. Title: Descriptive Writing

B. Key Questions: What is descriptive writing? How can I recognize a descriptive text? What are the components of a descriptive text? How do I create a piece of descriptive writing? How do I edit a peer's paper and look for good descriptive writing techniques? What is a simile and how do I use one in writing? What is a metaphor and how do I use on in writing? What are the parts of speech used in effective descriptive text and how do I use them? How can I use my knowledge of descriptive writing to write an essay about the topic of my coice?

C. Author: Joanna Smith

II. Entry Behavior:

A. School Setting: This unit is intended for use in any public or private school in the United States.

B. Grade level/Class size: This unit is intended for seventh grade students, but can be adapted to fit any middle or high school level. The class size is ideally for 20-25 students, but can also be adapted to apply to other class sizes.

C. Ability level: This unit is intended for a heterogeneous classroom which includes students of various learning styles, abilities, and interests.

D. Number of days/lessons/length of classes: This unit will cover ten days of a 35 minute period. There will be a new lesson for each of the ten days.

E. Prior knowledge: Students will understand that there are different types of writing. Students will know that different types of text are used for different purposes. Students will also know that effective writing techniques are important to convey meaning, ideas, and other important aspects of text. Students should know that "descriptions" are the characteristics of something, and be able to use that prior knowledge to understand "descriptive writing." Students should also know what an interview is, and how to conduct one professionally. Students should also know the different parts of speech such as the adjective, adverb, verb, and noun.

III. Unit Rational: This unit was created to enable students to recognize descriptive text and to write descriptively. Characteristically, descriptive text provides enough adjectives, adverbs, and strong verbs to be able to visually imagine the author's focus. Students should be able to recognize this type of writing as well as use their knowledge of characterization, simile, metaphor, and strong descriptor words to make their writing more effective. Students will also be required to test their interviewing skills when they must interview a staff member or supervisor.

The intention of this unit is to "write with a purpose." Students will individually interview a staff member in order to write a descriptive essay about a class, club, sport, or any other extracurricular activity of their choice. These essays will be compiled at the end of the unit in order to create a handbook for new students of the school. The handbook will be available to anyone interested in them and will be kept in the school office.

IV. Key Concepts/Generalizations, Skills and Attitudes to be Developed:

A. Concepts: mental imagery, effective writing, writing for a purpose, grammatical parts of speech, and interview skills.

B. Generalizations: There are many types of text. Descriptive texts are created in order to provide the reader with enough descriptors to make an idea, message, or mental image clear. Many times, descriptive writing relies on "characterization" to describe something.

C. Skills: Reading, Writing, Brainstorming, Peer editing, Comprehending, Interviewing, Constructive criticizing, Receiving criticism, Discussing.

D. Attitudes: Students must be able to appreciate different types of text, be willing to learn the components of descriptive writing, be open to brainstorm for ideas, be excited to communicate and share with peers, and be excited about the writing assignment. Students must also have a professional and courteous attitude for the interview with a school staff member. Students should have a flexible attitude and be willing to try their best at the assignments.

V. Content Outline:

A. A drawing activity

B. Modeling a good descriptive text

C. Sign-up for essay topic and rubric explanation

D. Unknown Character

E. Mad Libs

F. Simile mini lesson

H. QAR worksheet

I. Grab Bag activity

J. Metaphor mini lesson

K. Peer editing

L. Hershey Kiss activity

M. "End of Unit" journal writing

Thematic Unit

"Descriptive Writing"

Unit Outline

Day One
- "A Drawing Activity"
- KWL Chart

Day Two
- "Modeling a Good Descriptive Text"
- (Frayer Model adaptation)
- Graphic Organizer
- Model Overheads

Day Three
- "Sign-up and Rubric Explanation"
- Suggested Questions Handout
- Rubric Handout

Day Four
- "Unknown Character Mini-Lesson"

Day Five
- "Mad Libs Mini-Lesson"
- (adaptation of the Cloze Technique)

Day Six
- "In-Class Writing"
- QAR Handout

Day Seven
- "Grab Bag Activity"

Day Eight
- "Peer Editing"
- Peer Editing Worksheet

Day Nine
- "Hershey Kiss Activity"

Day Ten
- "End of Unit Journal Writes"
- Journal Writes
- Turn in Descriptive Writing Folders

Thematic Unit
Day 1

Title: A Drawing Activity

Objectives: SWBAT select specific verbal clues to aid in descriptions. Students will verbally describe a picture, enabling them to more accurately produce descriptors in future writing assignments.

Materials: white paper and folders for each student and the KWL handout

Motivation: The teacher will have "No books or notes necessary – only CREATIVITY!" on the board.

Guided Practice: The teacher should begin class by passing out the KWL chart before instructing students to fill in the columns according to the topic, "Descriptive Writing." The teacher should also pass out an empty notebook/folder for each student – this folder will house all of the Descriptive Writing assignments before being turned in at the end of the unit. Next, the teacher should do the following:

- Pass out the blank white paper.
- Request that each student pair up with the student beside him and sit *facing* each other.
- Explain that students are to each draw a *very simple* picture on their piece of paper.
- Students should not look at each other's work.
- One person should use descriptor words to explain what their picture looks like while his partner tries to follow his directions and draw a duplicate picture.
- The second partner will then do the same while the first partner attempts to duplicate his picture. (the student cannot use facial/hand gestures.)
- *IMPORTANT: Stress that the partner who is drawing *cannot* ask his partner questions!

Before students begin to work, the teacher should model what kind of descriptors may be helpful. Some examples are:

- In what part of the paper is the picture located?

- Approximately what are the dimensions of the picture?
- What are the characteristics of each object in the picture?
- Did I press down hard with my pen/pencil or did I draw lightly?

The teacher should explain that the more accurate, specific, and strong descriptors will help to create a more accurate duplication of the original drawing.

Independent Practice: Students will independently draw for 3 minutes before beginning work with a partner. The remainder of the activity will last approximately 15 minutes.

Closure: The teacher should stress the importance of descriptors. Strong descriptors such as adjectives, adverbs, and verbs enhance writing by creating a "picture" or "image" in the reader's mind.

Evaluation: The teacher will evaluate the success of the activity by questioning the students. The teacher should lead the discussion with the following questions:

- Which pair has the most similar pictures?
- What kinds of words did the partner who described his picture use?
- What did the drawer find the most helpful?
- Who had a more difficult time?
- Which pair has two drawings that look nothing alike?
- What did you find hard about describing your picture?
- What could you have done differently now that you see your partner's paper?
- Do you see some crucial information that you never described?
- *How does this activity relate to writing?

Sponge Activity: Students should write down some words that they used to describe their picture to their partner. Can they think of more accurate words to replace some things that they said? For example, if a student said "a long, straight line," he may replace it with "a five inch, horizontal line."

Name _____

Dates _____

What I know about **Descriptive Writing**	What I **want** to know about **Descriptive Writing**	What I have **learned** about **Descriptive Writing**
1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	3.

Reflections for the Teacher:

Did the lesson meet the stated objectives?

What did not work well?

What should I explain more?

Did the students enjoy the lesson?

What can I do differently next time so the lesson is more effective and enjoyable?

Other comments about the lesson or ideas about new lessons:

Thematic Unit
Day 2

Title: Modeling a Good Descriptive Text

Objectives: SWBAT select effective descriptor words after discussing the differences between effective and ineffective descriptive writing. Students will also be able to apply descriptors to complete a graphic organizer regarding descriptive writing. The completion of this graphic organizer will reflect students' new ability to choose strong adjectives, adverbs, verbs, and other parts of English grammar to describe something with which they are familiar.

Materials: blank graphic organizer and two overheads with colored markers

Motivation: On the board: "How can we use yesterday's activity to help us write a descriptive essay?"

Guided Practice: The teacher will begin class by remind students that yesterday they talked about how to verbally use good descriptors. Today, the class will learn how to use these abilities in writing. The teacher will do the following adaptation of the Frayer Model:

- Use the overhead projector to model good descriptive text. (Williams or Clare).
- Explain the effectiveness of the text by pointing out:
    - strong adjectives, adverbs, and verbs
        - Where are the adjectives? Adverbs? Verbs?
            - Underline different grammatical structures with different colored markers. (red for adjectives, etc.)
    - active language
    - the mental image that is created by the words
    - the fact that we can draw what the author is explaining
- Use the overhead projector to model ineffective descriptive text. ("Plain Jane" worksheet/overhead).
- Explain the weaknesses of the sentences by pointing out:
    - no strong adjectives, adverbs, or verbs

- Underline the parts of speech the same way as before. After that is complete, compare the two overheads by pointing out the differences in amount of descriptors.
- the language is inactive
- no mental image can be accurately created
- "correct" the ineffective sentences by asking for volunteers to suggest more adjectives, adverbs, and verbs. Re-write the sentences in the spaces provided.

The teacher should then pass out the blank graphic organizer and explain that it is just like a brainstorming web, only the squares are supporting details of the squares above it. The single box at the top is the "Topic," the four squares underneath it are for supporting sentences, and the squares underneath them are to detail the supporting sentences. The last box is for the student to make a concluding sentence for the paragraph. The teacher may model the graphic organizer on the overhead if students are confused.

The student should pick an aspect of their own bedrooms to be the topic of their graphic organizer. (ex.: bed, a favorite poster, etc.)

Independent Practice: The students should independently decide on a topic, which they are extremely familiar with (such as their own bedrooms), and fill-in the graphic organizer accordingly.

After filling in the graphic organizer, students should transfer that information into paragraph form. The paragraph's topic will be the graphic organizer topic, and so on. Students should be able to see the way the graphic organizer helped them with supporting details.

Closure: The teacher should ask students to voluntarily read the paragraph that they have written. If they feel uncomfortable, ask them to just explain their graphic organizer. If there are no volunteers, call on people at random. If students have not finished their paragraph, they must finish it for homework.

The teacher should ask students to begin thinking about a teacher/class/club/sport that they are interested in. They should come to class tomorrow with a specific topic in mind for a Descriptive Paper.

Evaluation: The teacher should request that students pass in their graphic organizers and paragraphs. The teacher will look for completion, correct flow of ideas, supporting sentences, and details, for strong descriptors, a coherence of ideas, and distinct similarities between the structure of the graphic organizer and the paragraph. The graphic organizer and paragraph will be returned so students may put them in their "Descriptive Writing Folder." The graphic organizer and paragraph will not be graded, but they must be finished and included in the folder to receive maximum points.

Sponge: Check the "Sponge Activities" page.

WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS (1883-1963)

RED WHEEL BARROW

SO MUCH DEPENDS
UPON

A RED WHEEL
BARROW

GLAZED WITH RAIN
WATER

BESIDE THE WHITE
CHICKENS.

John Clare

First Love

I ne'er was struck before that hour
With love so sudden and so sweet.
Her face it bloomed like a sweet flower
And stole my heart away complete.

My face turned pale, a deadly pale.
My legs refused to walk away,
And when she looked what could I ail
My life and all seemed turned to clay.

And then my blood rushed to my face
And took my eyesight quite away.
The trees and bushes round the place
Seemed midnight at noonday.

I could not see a single thing,
Words from my eyes did start.
They spoke as chords do from the string,
And blood burnt round my heart.

Are flowers the winter's choice
Is love's bed always snow
She seemed to hear my silent voice
Not love appeals to know.
I never saw so sweet a face
As that I stood before.
My heart has left its dwelling place
And can return no more.

"Plain Jane"

Example: The girl went to the store.
The lazy girl slowly crept to the store.

The boys were playing football.

_____

_____

The principal came into the room.

_____

_____

My parents ate the food in the school cafeteria.

_____

_____

The students reacted to seeing the bears.

_____

_____

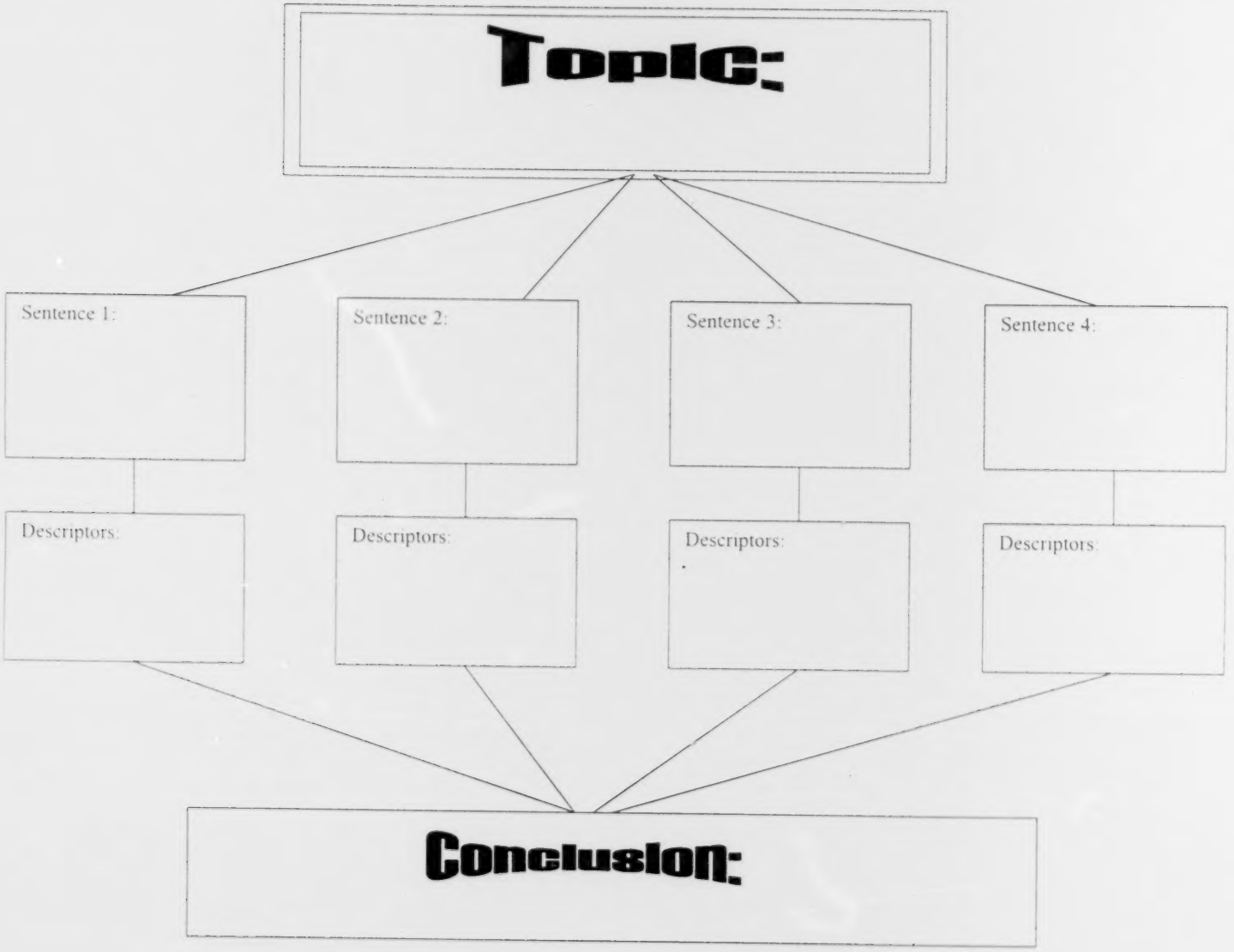
A man walked through the woods.

_____

_____

Name: _____

Date: _____


Topic:
Sentence 1:
Sentence 2:
Sentence 3:
Sentence 4:
Descriptors:
Descriptors:
Descriptors:
Descriptors:
Conclusion:

Thematic Unit
Day 3

Title: Sign-up for Descriptive Essay and Requirement Explanation

Objectives: SWBAT discover what they will need to prepare for their Descriptive Writing assignment. They will develop a list of questions that they will need to answer in their essay.

Materials: rubric handout and overhead, checklist and "Suggested Questions" handouts.

Motivation: The teacher should ask the students: "Who has ever moved and been the new student in a school? What was it like for you? We are going to help new students by writing our own 'New Student Handbook.' This handbook will be kept in the office so that new students will have a resource for getting to know Lamberton Middle School."

Guided Practice: There should be a sign-up sheet on the board that lists the teachers, classes, clubs, and sports of the school. The teacher should point it out to students, reminding them that they should have thought about their topic during the last evening.
The focus of the class should center on the purpose and requirements of the Descriptive Writing assignment. The teacher will explain the following:

- Each student will have a topic (they will not be working in pairs!)
- The topics must be researched
- Each student will have to write a 3-5 paragraph essay concerning their topic
- The essay will be descriptive in nature
- Each student must fulfill the requirements stated in the rubric
    - The teacher should pass out the rubric
    - The rubric should be discussed and explained to the class
    - Any questions concerning the rubric may be answered at this time

After the discussion of the rubric, the teacher should request that students sign-up for a desired topic. In this situation, if more than one student requests a topic, both should sign up for *two* topics, and then names will be chosen "out of a hat." This is not "first come, first served."

After the students have returned to their seats, the teacher should pass out the "Question Suggestion" handout. On this handout, there are different kinds of questions that the student may ask to assist him on the completion of the assignment. After the teacher disperses this handout, he will have students read the section which is relevant to their topics, and *write five more questions of their own.* These additional questions should be placed in their "Descriptive Writing Folder" for future reference.

Independent Practice: Students should work on their questions for their topic.

Closure/Sponge Activity: The teacher should ask for volunteers to read their most unique and helpful question. If no one volunteers, each student will be required to share three of his ideas by writing them down on a slip of paper as a "ticket to leave."

Evaluation: The teacher should evaluate students based on their successful completion of an additional five questions concerning their topic. While students are working independently, the teacher should circulate through the room and ensure that student work. The teacher should look for questions which reflect: independent thought, relevance to topic, and interest in the topic.

Name _____

Date _____

Descriptive Essay Rubric

	Excellent!		Average		Needs Improvement
☆ The author uses effective and original descriptors.	5	4	3	2	1
☆ The reader can create a mental image.	5	4	3	2	1
☆ The author has an intro. that arouses the reader's interest.	5	4	3	2	1
☆ The essay is well organized and 3-5 paragraphs long.	5	4	3	2	1
☆ There are few or no grammatical errors.	5	4	3	2	1
☆ The author uses at least one simile and one metaphor.	5	4	3	2	1
☆ The essay was completed on time.	5	4	3	2	1
☆ The author included all four QAR sentences.	5	4	3	2	1
☆ All of the necessary materials are in the D.W. Folder.	5	4	3	2	1
☆ Your Peer Editing responses were insightful, helpful, and showed a true interest in helping the author.	5	4	3	2	1

23 **Total** _____ /50

Suggested Questions.....

For a Club:

Who is in charge?
Who can join?
Who is currently in it?
When does the club meet?
What do they do during a meeting?
What do they do outside of meetings?
What opinions do members have about the club?

For a Sport:

Who is the coach?
Who is the captain?
When does the team practice? How often?
How many people are on the team?
What is the overall record of the team? Historically?
What happens during a regular practice?
How many games does the team play during a season?

For an Interview with a teacher:

How long have you been teaching at Lamberton?
How long have you been a teacher?
From where did you graduate?
Where else have you taught? Other subjects/grades?
What do you enjoy doing outside of class?
Are you in charge of any extracurricular activities?
What is your favorite aspect of teaching?

Signature of teacher/coach/supervisor _____

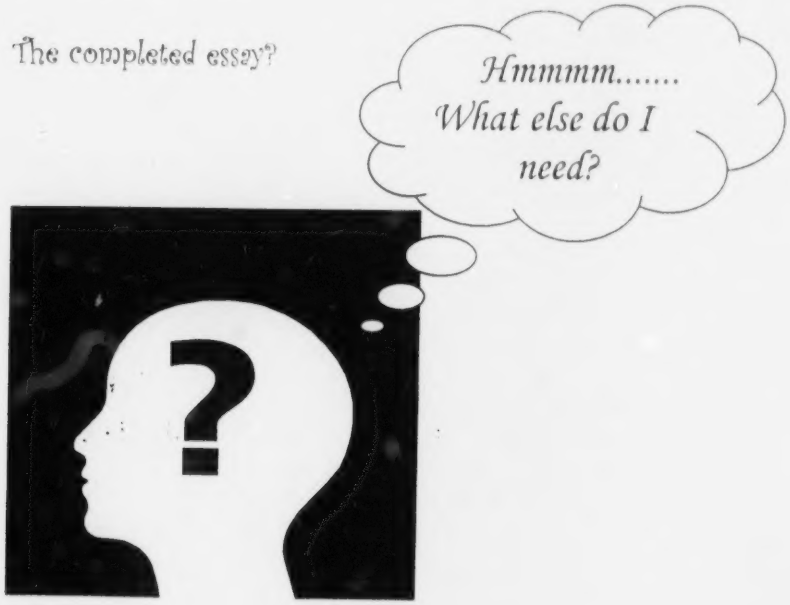
Name _____

Date _____

Checklist for "Descriptive Writing" Folders

Do you have.....

- ☐ The KWL Chart?
- ☐ The Graphic Organizer and Paragraph?
- ☐ Homemade Mad Lib?
- ☐ The QAR Worksheet?
- ☐ The Rubric?
- ☐ The First Rough Draft?
- ☐ The Peer Editing Worksheet?
- ☐ Hershey Kiss Notes?
- ☐ The completed essay?



Thematic Unit
Day 4

Title: "The Unknown Character" Mini Lesson

Objectives: SWBAT justify their choices of questions from yesterday by participating in today's activity. Students will continue their creation of appropriate questions concerning their Descriptive Essay topics. The students will apply their knowledge of "characterization" to a game of "20 Questions" (a variation of "The Unknown Character").

Materials: Enough small strips of paper for each student

Motivation: The teacher should ask students: "How many of you have played '20 Questions' before?" They teacher may then ask student volunteers to explain how the game is played.

Guided Practice: If there is no student volunteer, then the teacher must explain the rules of the game.

- The teacher will think of a certain person.
- Each student will think of a yes/no question to ask the teacher
- The responses to the questions will narrow down the characteristics so that there is only one student who may be the "unknown character."
- After 20 – 25 questions (to accommodate class size), each student is to write down a guess on the slip of paper and turn it in to the teacher.
- The teacher will tally the results, and whoever is correct wins a prize (candy).

IMPORTANT – The teacher must be sure to explain that the list of questions they asked all contribute to the *characterization* of a person. A *characterization* is a description of the qualities of a character. The teacher must also stress that students can think of characterizations of other topics, such as the ones found in their Descriptive Essays.

Independent Practice: The students should find a partner, and play "20 Questions" with each other and use their descriptive essay as their "mystery

topic." Students should pick a partner who has a topic that the first student does not know. (If student A knows that student B is writing about the math teacher, he should not pick student B as his partner.) Students should carefully listen to the questions asked because it may be information about their topic that they never thought about. These questions may be important for making their descriptive essays more effective. Students will also be more aware if they know everything that they need to know about their topic.

Closure: The teacher should ask students to write down three questions or ideas that they thought of during the game. This slip of paper should be collected as a "ticket to leave."

Evaluation: The teacher should evaluate the day's lesson based on the written responses. The teacher should look for: student comprehension of the assignment, the correct adaptation of the game to the written question/idea, evidence that the student understands the concept of characterization, relevance to each individual essay, and responses that can be appropriately described as "characterizations."

Sponge: See the list of options on the "Sponge Activities" page.

Thematic Unit
Day 5

Title: Mad Lib Mini-Lesson (adaptation of the Cloze Technique)

Objectives: Students will discover the importance of descriptor words by practicing with *Mad Libs* books, a variation of the Cloze Tecnhique. Descriptor words have an overall effect over the meaning of text, and students will be able to decide on effective and accurate descriptors to enhance writing. Students will also discover the importance of similes in descriptive writing.

Materials: *Mad Libs* ook

Motivation: The teacher should ask the students: "Who has ever played with a *Mad Libs* book before?"

Guided Practice: The teacher will do the following:

- Ask students to get out a blank piece of paper.
- Ask students to write down a series of parts of speech according to the *Mad Lib* book.
- Ask volunteers to contribute a word each so that the class may complete the *Mad Lib* activity together.
- Read the mad lib, allowing students to use the words that they wrote by themselves (silently).
- Read the group mad lib aloud.
- Discuss the changes in meaning and ideas between the two versions of mad libs.
- The discussion should include questions such as:
    - Can you see how different adjectives/adverbs/verbs/nouns can change the overall meaning of text? Give me examples.
    - Can you see how strong descriptor words make the text more interesting? Give me examples.
    - What kinds of words, now that we know the text, can we change to create an effective, descriptive paragraph that makes sense?

Independent Practice: Students will write a one paragraph, descriptive "story." They should underline all of their adjectives, adverbs, verbs, and nouns, and erase some. They should find a partner, and ask for the parts of speech to fill in the blanks. They have created their own mad lib! Students should place these homemade mad libs in their Descriptive Writing folders.

"Mini Lesson" on Similes:

The teacher should put the "Similes" overhead on the projector. Explain what a simile is, how it is used, why it is used, and that students will need to include their own, original similes in their descriptive essays.

- A simile is a comparison of two unlike things. A simile uses "like" or "as."
- Similes are used in poetry, literature, and other forms of writing.
- Similes are used so that the author may create a more interesting image.

Closure: Remind students that they will need all of their essay notes so they can begin writing their essays tomorrow.

Evaluation: The teacher should evaluate students based on their voluntary responses during the activity. If the mad lib required an adjective, did they provide one or did they use an adverb? The teacher should also look for completion of the "homemade" mad lib assignment. The teacher should assess student comprehension by asking questions that review the mini lesson on similes.

- What is a simile?
- How do you identify a simile?
- Why do authors include similes in writing?

Sponge: The teacher should ask the students to write down two original similes on a slip of paper to turn in as an "exit slip." The teacher may also select an activity from the "Sponge Activities" page.

Figurative language is a tool that an author uses to help the reader visualize (or see) what is happening in a story or poem.

THE SIMILE

A simile is a comparison using *like* or *as*. It usually compares two dissimilar objects.

For example:

His feet were as big as boats.

The boy was as thin as a stick.

He spun like a top.

The soda burst like a volcano.

Thematic Unit
Day 6

Title: In-Class Writing

Objectives: Students will begin to write their Descriptive Writing essays by using their acquired notes and using the QAR-adapted method of writing. The students should write at least two QAR sentences from their notes (if not all four). Students will be able to ask the teacher questions concerning their essays.

Materials: Students will need their "Descriptive Writing Folders," blank paper, writing utensils, QAR worksheet, and anything else they will need to begin their writing assignment.

Motivation: The teacher will have music playing in the background, conduct a 2 minute period of "stretch and move," and allow students to write where ever they feel most comfortable (teacher must be sure that the students will *work* in their chosen places.)

Guided Practice: The teacher will allow a period of free writing, an opportunity for students to begin completing their Descriptive Writing assignment. The teacher should be available to answer any questions concerning the assignment. The teacher should also be sure that students have their "Descriptive Writing Folders" with the necessary information. If a student does not have his information, then the teacher should assign that student a one-page descriptive essay (on the topic of their choice) that will be due at the end of the period.

In order for students to understand the QAR, the teacher will need to explain the following:

- QAR is short for Question-Answer Relationships.
- Students need to write four sentences from their notes and include them in their rough drafts.
- The first sentence must be directly from their notes (verbatim).
- The second sentence must be a combination of two different ideas from their notes (ex: a teacher begins one job in 1978 and leaves in 1988. The student may write about the teacher being in one school for 10 years.).

- The third sentence must be a personal conclusion about the topic (it is not directly in the text).
- The fourth sentence must be a sentence based on the student's own experience with the interview/research.

Independent Practice: Students will work independently to begin their writing assignments. After writing as many QAR sentences as they can, students should begin the rough draft of the writing assignment. Students should also try to include all of the QAR sentences (the first one will obviously be included at this point).

Closure: The teacher will remind students that this first rough draft must be included in their folders, and that the final product will be due in three days.

Evaluation: The teacher should evaluate the students based on the amount of completed work at the end of the period. While walking through the classroom, the teacher should look for: student engagement, the start of rough drafts, and at least 2 of the 4 required QAR sentences.

Sponge: If there is any extra time, the students should continue writing.

QAR -- Question-Answer Relationships

Four kinds of sentences:

1. **"Right there."** The sentence is already in your notes
2. **"Think and Search."** The sentence is in your notes, but you will have to put parts of your notes together to complete it.
   Ex. Your teacher began teaching at one school in 1978 and left for another job in 1988. Your sentence could be:
   "_____ worked at _____ school for ten years."
3. **"Notes and You."** The sentence is not in your notes; you must *conclude* something since you know the information so well.
4. **"On My Own."** The sentence is going to be based on your own experiences during the research process, interview, or writing process.

"Right there."

_____

_____

_____

"Think and Search."

_____

_____

_____

"Notes and You."

_____

_____

_____

"On My Own."

_____

_____

_____

Thematic Unit
Day 7

Title: Grab-Bag Activity

Objectives: SWBAT choose, select, and test descriptor words to describe an unknown object to their classmates.

Materials: The Grab-Bag filled with 25-30 small objects

Motivation: As motivation, the teacher will model how to play the game. The teacher will pick an object out of the grab bag, keep it hidden from everyone, and must describe it well enough that the students can guess what it is.

Guided Practice: The motivation acts as a guided practice. After that, the teacher will ask for volunteers to "pick and describe." If students seem hesitant, then allow them to come up one by one, pick an object, and go back to their desks to think about what they are going to say.

Independent Practice: Students will choose and select descriptor words before testing their choices in front of the class.

"Mini Lesson" on Metaphors:

The teacher may conduct a mini lesson using the overhead on metaphors. The teacher should explain what a metaphor is, why metaphors are used in writing, and the differences between a metaphor and a simile.

- A metaphor is a comparison of two unlike things.
- A metaphor is different from a simile because a metaphor does not use "like" or "as."
- A metaphor enhances descriptive writing by creating a more vivid image for the reader.

Closure: The teacher should ask that students use the same care in describing their topic for their essay. For homework, they must have their rough draft completed because, tomorrow they will peer edit each other's papers.

Evaluation: The teacher should evaluate the lesson by deciding if students chose and selected appropriate words to describe their object and if other students could guess what object they had.

Sponge: The teacher may request that students write down two original metaphors on a slip of paper for "exit slips." The teacher may also check the "Sponge Activities" page.

THE METAPHOR

A metaphor states that one thing is something else. It is a comparison, but it does NOT use like or as to make the comparison.

For example:

Her hair is silk.

The pillow was a cloud under my head.

The giant's steps were thunder as he ran towards Jack.

Thematic Unit
Day 8

Title: Peer Editing first draft of the Descriptive Writing Essay

Objectives: Students will edit each other's rough drafts. Students will assess each other's use of effective descriptors, recommend stronger descriptors, support what the student has written, and evaluate the overall effectiveness of peers' papers.

Materials: "Descriptive Writing Folders," peer editing worksheet, rough drafts.

Motivation: The teacher should have half of the class turn in their paper, and the teacher will mix them up. Then, the teacher will give the students who kept their papers a "donated" paper. The student who receives another's paper will then give their own paper to the corresponding student.

Guided Practice: The teacher will pass out the peer editing sheet and quickly go over the questions that students will be answering. The teacher should be sure that everyone understands the requirements and that the worksheet *will* be included in their overall essay grade. The more they help their peers, the more points they will receive.

Independent Practice: Students will read each a peer's paper and then fill out the peer editing worksheet as needed. Students may then meet with their "editor," receive the paper of suggestions, and ask questions if need be. After they have both explained their suggestions, the students may begin to revise their rough draft.

Closure: The teacher should remind the students that the paper will be due on Friday and that everything must be included in their "Descriptive Writing Folder."

Evaluation: The teacher will evaluate the students after the folders have been turned in. The teacher will look for: helpful peer editing, appropriate changes made to the paper, and completion of the peer editing worksheet.

Sponge: Check the "Sponge Activities" page.

Author's name:
Title:
My name:
Date:

Peer Editing Sheet

1. The author's topic is:

2. The author has an… ☐ introduction and ☐ conclusion.

3. The author's best descriptive words are:
   1.
   2.
   3.
   4.
   5.

4. The author's weakest descriptive words are:
   1.
   2.
   3.
   4.
   5.

5. Some suggestions I have for improving the weakest descriptive words:
   1.
   2.
   3.
   4.
   5.

6. The author's four QAR sentences are:
   In the Text:

   Think and Search:

   Author and You:

   On My Own:

Author's name:
Title:
My name:
Date:

7. Some questions that I have about the topic:

8. Some suggestions for making the paper stronger and more descriptive:

9. Overall effectiveness of the paper:

10. What I enjoyed most about this paper:

Thematic Unit
Day 9

Title: Hershey Kiss Activity

Objectives: SWBAT apply what they have learned about descriptor words to describe – in detail – the experience of eating a Hershey's Kiss. Students will evaluate how the different descriptions relay the same experiences differently.

Materials: Hershey's Kisses, blank paper

Motivation: The teacher will pass out Hershey's Kisses while the students are entering the classroom. Each student is instructed NOT to eat the Kiss.

Guided Practice: The teacher will instruct the students that they are going to write a description of the experience of eating a Hershey's Kiss. The students do not have to write in sentence form, but they must use as many descriptors as possible to describe ALL FIVE of their senses. Students *must not* chew the Kiss, they may only let it melt in their mouths. Students must think and answer questions concerning:

- What does the Kiss feel like in your mouth?
- What does the Kiss taste like?
- What is the texture of the Kiss at any moment in time?
- What do you hear while you eat your Kiss?
- Do you smell anything?
- Are there any distractions around you?

Students must remain quiet during this activity in order to receive sensory information more accurately.

The notes from this activity should be included in their "Descriptive Writing Folders."

Independent Practice: Students will sit, silently, for approximately 10 – 15 minutes while writing notes concerning their Kiss experience.

Closure: The teacher will ask for volunteers to relay some of the more surprising things that students encountered. If no one volunteers, then call

on different people to explain their experience. The class should compare and contrast the experiences. Students should notice that while everyone explained the same experience, the descriptions change from person to person. The teacher may write on the board the different adjectives that people use to describe the same feeling, taste, texture, etc.

Evaluation: The students should be evaluated based on the notes they wrote during the exercise. Did students: respond to all senses, use accurate descriptors instead of generic descriptors, use unique and specific words, and show an interest in completing the activity?

Sponge: If there are enough Kisses left, the class may do the exercise again, this time chewing on the Hershey Kiss.

Thematic Unit
Day 10

Title: End of Unit Journal Writes

Objectives: Students will turn in their completed essays with their "Descriptive Writing Folders," complete their KWL charts (the "learned" column), and reflect in a one-page journal response concerning the past two weeks of descriptive writing.

Materials: writing paper and the students' "Descriptive Writing Folders"

Motivation: The journal prompt will be on the board: "During the past two weeks, I learned how to improve my descriptive writing abilities." Underneath that, the teacher will write: "The most exciting part of this experience has been…" "The most interesting thing I learned about descriptive writing…" and "Descriptive writing will play a role in my life because…" The students may choose which prompt they write about.

Guided Practice: The teacher will request that students take five minutes to fill in the "Learned" column of the KWL charts and place them back in their D.W. Folders. The teacher will then request that students make sure they have all of the items on the Checklist handout in their folders. Next, the teacher will direct the students' attention to the board, and ask them to write a one-page (the minimal length) journal response to the prompt. This does not have to be edited or gramatically perfect; the teacher is looking for thoughts and ideas, not the writing process. The teacher should allow students the remainder of the class to complete the assignment.

Independent Practice: Students will independently fill out the KWL chart, organize their materials, and respond to the journal prompt.

Closure: Ask students volunteer to read their interesting ideas.

Evaluation: The evaluation process will take place after all of the D.W. Folders have been turned in, completed. The teacher will look for the items listed on the rubric, plus the journal response. The journal response will be worth five points (all five will be given if a journal is turned in).

Sponge: The teacher should refer to the "Sponge Activities" page.

Ticket to Leave

3-5 min.

1. **Write down three things that you learned today.**

2. **Write down two things that you have a question about.**

3. **Write down five descriptive sentences.**

4. **Turn to a partner and ask that person a question to review the day's lesson. Have that person answer, then ask you a question. Write down the questions and answers to turn in.**

5. **Write down five descriptive sentences to describe exactly how you are feeling right now.**

Ticket to Leave

5-10 min.

1. **Create your own graphic organizer to illustrate what you have learned today.**

2. **Write down two things that you don't understand about today's lesson and share them with the person beside you. Can they give you any advice concerning the answer? Prepare to share this with the class.**

3. **Write a short letter to me telling me about what you've learned today, what you don't understand, and what you would like to do with this information.**

4. **What do you want to be when you grow up? Write a short journal entry about why descriptive writing will be important to your job.**

5. **Write on the board: "Everyone needs to know how to write descriptively." Turn to a partner and discuss if you agree or disagree with this statement. If you disagree, can you give examples of times when one would *never* have to write descriptively? Prepare to share your answers.**